The prices of diesel are uniform for different sections of society throughout the country and no subsidy on diesel is provided from the Union Budget.

As regards subsidy to farmers using diesel pumps, the Department of Agriculture and Co-operation have a capital subsidy scheme to provide subsidies to small and marginal farmers for procurement of pump-sets.

Creation of monolithic oil entities

921. SHRI R.K. ANAND : Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any plan to create three monolithic PSU oil entities;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Indian oil companies indulge in destructive competition both at home and abroad; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI MANI SHANKAR AIYAR): (a) No such proposal is under consideration of the Government.

(b) and (c) The Planning Commission in its Mid Term Review of the Tenth Plan has, *inter-alia*, stated that oil Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) are competing with one another leading to sub-optimal investments, and that there is a need to review the investment programme of each Oil PSU and take an integrated view of the sector for optimal investment of public funds. While Oil PSUs take investment decisions based on their business and commercial considerations from out of their own internal resources, Government also intervenes wherever considered necessary with a view to avoiding unhealthy competition between them and enabling optimal investments in the sector as a whole. Government also approves the Annual Plan Outlays proposed by oil PSUs.

Violation of environment norm by Private Companies

†922. SHRI KALRAJ MISHRA: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have given the contract to private companies for the exploration of oil at some new place in the country;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.